

88-213

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June 18, 1959



MEMORANDUM FOR: Honorable Robert Murphy

I refer to our telephone conversation today.

In my conversation with the President he indicated that in connection with the discussion of "token" forces in Berlin he would be interested in something more than simply keeping the Flag planted. However, there is a question as to whether there is any place for negotiation with respect to the level of troops to be maintained. He will be interested in knowing from the point of view of General Norstad, as well as from the U.S. point of view here, what is the level of troops that really should be maintained. For example, could the figure go from 11,000 to 6,000?

I learned from you that he had previously touched upon this matter with Acting Secretary Dillon and I am writing only to make sure that coordinated attention is given to the problem.

Therefore, as I said to you over the telephone, I would like to assume that you and your associates will address yourselves to this question whether or not you choose to use the mechanism of the Murphy Committee.

Please allow me to add that I do not believe that the President is proposing the reduction but wishes to have the matter studied in light of current discussion about it.

Gordon Gray

Special Assistant to the President

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E.O. 13526, SEC. 3.4 (b)

MN 88-213-1
BY ZB DATE 7/5/91

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